

PATENT

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suture-receiving opening in combination with a suture retrieving means and further recite a cannula having a tissue engaging distal end.

The Pingleton reference describes an endoscopic tissue grasper and retractor. There is no disclosure in Pingleton of the combination of a suture pusher having a suture-receiving opening in combination with a suture retrieving means a recited in Applicant's claims, or of those features together with the cannula having a tissue engaging end which is recited in Claims 9 - 12. Moreover, providing such a combination of elements with the Pingleton device would not follow from the tissue-grasping function of Pingleton's jaws.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 7 - 14 are allowable of the prior art of record. Early reconsideration and allowance of the claims is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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